

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/pakistan-radio-station-bombed-reporter-shot-21-04-2011,40078.html>

Asia - Pakistan

Targeted attacks

Radio station bombed, reporter shot in separate attacks in north

21 April 2011

Explosives placed outside the building that houses *FM 93 Radio Dilbar*, a radio station in Charsadda (in the northwestern province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), were detonated in the early hours of yesterday, damaging the two rooms, the studio and equipment. The station was able to resume broadcasting later today, after a nine-hour break in service.

"We are concerned by this attack's method and how vulnerable it shows journalists to be," Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Jean-François Julliard said. "We urge the authorities to do everything possible to protect journalists, who serve the public. A thorough investigation must be carried to identify those responsible and their motive."

Julliard added: "We urge the Pakistani government to increase the resources available to the police for investigating attacks and protecting news media, so that the media do not submit to the terror that those responsible for such attacks are clearly trying to spread."

The station's acting news editor, who uses the single name of **Zahid**, told Reporters Without Borders: "I don't know who might have done this. We have done no-one any wrong. We serve the community, providing news, entertainment and current affairs programmes."

Speaking on condition of anonymity, a police officer told Reporters Without Borders that the chief suspects were the Taliban although no possibility was being ruled out. He estimated that five kilos of explosives were used in the attack. There have been two other terrorist bombings in the Charsadda district in the past month.

Link to the radio station's Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/FM-93...> YouTube link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SdOI...>

Reporters Without Borders has also just learned that **Abdullah Bhattani**, a young journalist working for the Afghan news agency *Benawa* and the Pakistani news agency *INP*, was shot three times in a murder attempt on the evening of 12 April in Rawalpindi, in the northeastern province of Punjab.

He was returning to his hotel at about 11 p.m. when two men on a motorcycle called out to him. "When I stopped, one of the motorcyclists pulled out a pistol," Bhattani said. "He fired a first shot into my leg and I grabbed him. He fired a second shot and it hit me in the same leg. And the third bullet hit me again in the leg. But I kept resisting until the other motorcyclist hit me on the head with his helmet, allowing them to flee."

Bhattani, who is still unable to walk after three days in hospital, had previously received threatening messages on his mobile phone. Colleagues suspect that he was targeted because he covers the Tribal Areas and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province for an Afghan news agency.

Contacted by Reporters Without Borders, Tribal Union of Journalists president **Safdar Dawar** condemned the attack and said he had raised it with the interior minister.

"With a murder attempt and a bombing in two different provinces in the space of a week, Pakistan is clearly still one of the world's most dangerous places for journalists," Julliard added. "There has been no let-up in the violence against the media for several years. We again urge the authorities to take stock of this problem to make a clear commitment to defend the work of the media."

